

St. Joseph Action Plan - Table 3.1 - 2016 Master Plan

Transportation and Infrastructure	Priority (Objectives only)			Time Frame (Actions only)				Actions only		2016-2017 activities with proposed activity for 2017/2018	March 2021 update
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Within 2 years	2-5 years	5 plus years	Continuous	Responsible Party or Key Partners	Potential Funding Source		
Goal: Assess and maintain the City's existing infrastructure.											
<i>Objective:</i> Ensure road improvements are done in a strategic way to efficiently improve connectivity and access for all users.		X								CIP developed as part of SAW Grant prioritized projects based upon the criticality of the infrastructure. Connectivity to be addressed during public outreach effort (goal to implement recommendations in master plan where feasible)	Two pavement preventive maintenance projects have been completed and a third will happen in 2021. Street reconstruction has included new sewer and water lines and where feasible non-motorized paths. Projects took place in 2019 (Wallace), 2020 (Kingsley/Orchard), 2021 Langley
<i>Objective :</i> Implement the results of the Storm Assessment Management and Wastewater (SAW) grant to improve road pavement quality, focusing on highest priority actions first.		X								SAW Grant CIP includes preventative maintenance for roadways. Emphasis on keeping good roads good (most cost effective)	Two pavement preventive maintenance projects have been completed and a third will happen in 2021.
Goal: Encourage biking and walking as an integral part of daily life in the city.											
<i>Objective:</i> Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and connectivity with transit, schools, parks, employment centers, shopping, and other municipalities.		X									
<i>Action :</i> Develop a plan for a non-motorized network that highlights opportunities for modifications to existing infrastructure as well as new infrastructure investments.					X			City, PC, MDOT, Others	Public, Grants	Wallace Ave Project incorporates a non-motorized path. Future projects (Langley, Kingsley, Morton, Orchard, etc.) expected to add non-motorized facilities. Public input (public outreach program) will be solicited.	Langley road project will include non-motorized path similar to 2019 and 2020 projects.
<i>Action:</i> Identify opportunities to encourage bicycle racks at public and private destinations.				X				City, Business Owners	Public, Grants	As part of SUP request for Honor Credit Union and McDonald's requested installation of bike racks as part of site plan.	2020 PC started review of text amendment to ZO regarding Access, Bikes, Parking, Loading. Will require equipment under certain conditions. City looking at providing equipment at parks and downtown area.
<i>Action:</i> Install comprehensive signage to define bike routes.					X			City, Others	Public	No action.	No action.
<i>Action:</i> Identify high pedestrian vehicular conflict locations and high traffic intersections and prioritize these for improvements.					X			City, MDOT	Public, Grants	No action.	Downtown Vision Master Plan called out locations within study area

					X				Staff	Public	Staff gathering data to provide to Planning Commission for discussion and recommendation.	2020 PC started review of text amendment to ZO regarding Access, Bikes, Parking, Loading. Will require equipment under certain conditions. City looking at providing equipment at parks and downtown area. RRC requires amendments to ZO
<i>Action:</i> Review zoning requirements for parking.					X				Staff, County	Public, Grants	No action. Changes implemented below the bluff area for summer traffic along with limiting parking to one side of street in other areas.	Downtown Vision Master Plan completed comprehensive parking study for the downtown study area.
<i>Action:</i> Conduct a comprehensive parking study for both downtown and out-of-downtown parking.				X				Staff, County	Public	Public	Changeable message sign installed at State/Water. Along Lake Blvd have signage directing traffic. Implemented one-way	Public Safety continues fine tuning traffic and parking control during summer months.
<i>Action:</i> Work with Berrien County to add signage and improve communication on beach parking availability.				X				Staff, County, Residents, Businesses	Public		No action.	No action.
<i>Action:</i> Review existing on-street parking regulations to ensure they are compatible with parking needs and the impact on existing neighborhoods, services, and infrastructure.					X						No action.	No action.

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<i>Action:</i> Analyze and identify existing streets and parking lots capable of accommodating additional parking.					X			Staff	Public	Along the upper hill of Lions Park Beach added angled and parallel parking spaces. Created drop off area for Silver Beach. Designated parallel spaces along 1st, 2nd and 3rd Streets.	No additional action taken.
Goal: Maintain, protect and expand public access and connectivity to Lake Michigan, the St. Joseph River, and the Paw Paw River waterfronts.											
<i>Objective:</i> Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity and access between the north and south sides of the St. Joseph River.	X										
<i>Action:</i> Encourage use of street legal low speed vehicles as a common form of transportation north of the St. Joseph River with possible connection and expansion to						X		City, MDOT	N/A	No action.	Private business provides rental service. State law prohibits some locations where the vehicle can be driven.
<i>Objective:</i> Establish paths in corridors not well served by existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.		X									
<i>Action:</i> Establish a St. Joseph riverfront pedestrian and bicycle trail from the Margaret Upton Arboretum to Lakeland Healthcare and beyond, eventually connecting further south to the St. Joseph Charter Township trail system.						X		City, Residents, Others	Public, Grants	Intend to submit CIP request for easement preparation assistance to begin to secure easements along St. Joseph River south of Ann Street/Fisherman's Way	Investigated use of existing utility easements. Efforts stalled due to COVID-19

<i>Action:</i> Identify potential easements on private property along the riverfront to improve connections on both sides of the river.						X		City, Residents	Public	No action.	No action.
<i>Action :</i> Work with Lakeland Hospital to establish a path through the hospital property by establishing an easement.				X				City, Others	Public	No action.	Investigated use of existing utility easements. Efforts stalled due to COVID-19
<i>Action:</i> Connect existing trail facilities at Harbor Shores and Harbor Village with downtown St. Joseph and the waterfront.				X				City, Others	Public, Grants	No action.	Pedestrian bridge between Harbor Village and Benton Harbor across PawPaw River completed. Cornerstone and Berrien County created boat taxi locations in several areas.
<i>Action:</i> Establish a trail along the CSX right of way along Lake Michigan south of the water treatment plant.						X		City, Others	Public, Grants	Feasibility/Cost concern - CSX currently solely responsible for shoreline protection	No action taken.
<i>Action:</i> Identify potential easements on private property along the lakefront to improve connections south to the city limits.						X		City, Others	Public, Grants	Same comment above regarding starting process to secure easements	No action taken.

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Community and Place	Priority (Objectives only)			Time Frame (Actions only)				Actions only		2016-2017 activities with proposed activity for 2017/2018	
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Within 2 years	2-5 years	5 plus years	Continuous	Responsible Party or Key Partners	Potential Funding Source		
Goal: Preserve the traditional neighborhood feeling of safety, neighborliness and value in residential districts.											
<i>Objective:</i> Maintain high quality, well staffed, rapid response police and fire services.	X										
<i>Objective:</i> Respect existing neighborhoods and improve transitions between commercial, residential, and other zoning districts.		X									
<i>Action :</i> Explore height restrictions, landscaping standards, and regulations on hours of operation to ensure commercial developments are well-buffered from residences.					X			City	Public	Planning Commission is working aggressively to draft a new Sign Ordinance. Planning Commission started investigating improvement options along Niles Avenue south of Napier Road. Staff has been working on possible changes to Zoning Ordinance in the area of parking and landscaping.	Future task of the Planning Commission and required by RRC program.
<i>Action:</i> Improve street lighting in residential districts, considering LED or street light covers, to shield the brightness of the halogen lights.							X	City, Developers, Others	Public, Private	No action in residential areas, need to work with I & M. Approximately 50% of lights in the downtown area have been switched to LED.	Entire downtown has been converted to LED. I&M installed LED lights on all tariffed street lights in town.
<i>Objective :</i> Define the unique elements of each neighborhood.			X								
<i>Action :</i> Inventory and document unique characteristics of each neighborhood.						X		City	Public	No action.	No action taken.

<i>Objective:</i> Bury power lines and other utilities when possible in conjunction with planned roadwork.		X									Feasibility/Cost Concern: 2004 Lions Park Drive Project. Burying Electrical lines alone estimated at \$500,000	
<i>Objective :</i> Improve visual character of main thoroughfares to foster business retention and attract new businesses.		X										
<i>Action:</i> Conduct a design charrette focused on main thoroughfares to identify key node(s) and opportunities for a more welcoming streetscape.							X	City	Public	No action. During a meeting, the Planning Commission heard comments from MDOT regarding state route streetscape opportunities.	No action take. The Downtown Vision Master Plan discussed improvements to Main Street.	
<i>Action:</i> Review parking standards and appropriate sized parcels to attract desired commercial types of businesses.							X	City	Public	Staff gathering data to provide to Planning Commission for discussion and recommendation.	2020 PC started review of text amendment to ZO regarding Access, Bikes, Parking, Loading. Will require equipment under certain conditions. City looking at providing equipment at parks and downtown area. RRC requires amendments to ZO	
<i>Action:</i> Facilitate Access Management by reducing driveways on main thoroughfares to improve safety.							X	City, Developers	Public, Private	Key roads are predominately controlled by MDOT representative. Honor Credit Union decreased the number of curb cuts.	MDOT reviewing options as part of Main Street reconstruction later in 2020's.	

Goal: Work to provide recreational activities and community services that enhance quality of life for residents and attract new visitors.

<i>Objective :</i> Improve collaboration and cooperation with local and regional entities to maximize existing parks and recreational offerings and amenities.	X											
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<i>Action :</i> Establish a clearinghouse to serve as a single point of contact for organized recreational opportunities.						X		City, County	Public	No action.	Entered into an agreement with St Joseph Baseball Association and North Lincoln Baseball & Softball Association to administer youth baseball and softball.
<i>Action :</i> Use the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to evaluate existing conditions and prioritize replacements and upgrades				X				City	Public	Removed and replaced equipment at Lions Park Beach. Removed out of compliance equipment at Riverview and TinyTots. Replaced swing seats at most parks to bring into compliance.	Replaced swings and slide at Tiny Tots Park. Renovating amphitheater in Milton park. Updated landscaping in Lake Bluff Park.

							X				City	Public	Master Plans for Riverview, Dickinson, Whirlpool Centennial parks anticipated to approved in early 2018.	Applying for grants to improve Whirlpool Centennial Park	
<i>Action</i> : Evaluate whether existing facilities meet the diverse needs of the entire community.											X	City	Public	Adopted Master Plan in February 2016.	Adopted Master Plan in January 2021
<i>Action</i> : Periodically review the use and amenities at city parks to keep up with visitor demand, resident demand, and the market.											X	City	Public	Master Plans for Riverview, Dickinson, Whirlpool Centennial parks anticipated to be approved in early 2018.	Completed Master Plan update in 2021.
<i>Objective</i> : Maximize the enjoyment and use of Riverview Park.				X											
<i>Action</i> : Evaluate the feasibility of additional recreational amenities, for example disc golf and a campground, at Riverview Park.							X				City, Others	Public, Private, grants	Park specific Master Plan draft completed, expect final approval in early 2018.	Completed Master Plan update in 2021.	
<i>Action</i> : Maintain and expand trail system within park and add connectivity to city and other municipalities through implementation of a non-motorized path or bike lanes along M63 in conjunction with MDOT.							X				City, Others	Public, Grants	Park specific Master Plan in process. Anticipate completion of plan in early 2018.	Completed Master Plan update in 2021.	
Goal: Continue strong communications between city government and local and regional governmental entities as well as non-governmental organizations to ensure actions are in harmony with the surrounding area.															
<i>Action</i> : Hold regular joint meetings with community leaders, city boards and commissions, and with adjacent jurisdictions.											X	City, Others	N/A	City involved with CEO meetings and the Michigan Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council. Collaborative meeting held with Berrien County to discuss Silver Beach area. WSJOB, JWWTP serve to foster better relations with our neighbors. Attend quarterly planning/zoning meetings with Berrien County staff.	Work continues as previously stated.
Goal: Maintain consistent, efficient, and transparent government processes.															
<i>Objective</i> : Continue frequent and diverse city communications and maximize the use of all forms of communication, including social media, city newsletters, and neighborhood groups.				X											
Goal: Develop a long-range land use and development vision for the Harbor area.															
St. Joseph Action Plan - Table 3.1 - 2016 Master Plan															
Economic Development	Priority (Objectives only)			Time Frame (Actions only)				Actions only				2016-2017 activities with proposed activity for 2017/2018			
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Within 2 years	2-5 years	5 plus years	Continuous	Responsible Party or Key Partners	Potential Funding Source						

<i>Objective:</i> The City will take a leadership role in identifying relevant stakeholders and spearheading conversations to share information, ideas, and concerns with regards to the future of the Harbor area.			X															
<i>Action:</i> Conduct additional traffic counts on streets throughout the harbor area to identify key traffic patterns and potential conflicts between residential and industrial users.						X				City, SWMPC	Public, Private	We have some counts taken north of the SJ River by SWMPC. The City Engineering Department purchased a traffic counter and is taking counts for projects listed in the CIP. Could be deployed for this, need direction.	No additional action taken.					
<i>Action:</i> Determine the potential impacts of different future uses for the existing commercial harbor.					X					City, SWMPC, Others	Public	No action.	No action taken.					
<i>Objective:</i> Support and protect the Federal commercial harbor designation.			X															
<i>Action :</i> Investigate long term, sustainable locations and options for inner harbor dredging spoils, looking for potential collaborations with other communities.								X		City, County, Business Owners	Public, Private	Berrien County disbanned the St. Joseph River Harbor Authority Jan 2017. Cities of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph along with St. Joseph Charter Township exploring new multi-jurisdiction harbor authority options.	Harbor Study completed in Jan 2020. Three communities working on creating a committee which would draft rules/regulations for a future board. COVID has delayed work.					
<i>Action:</i> Take a leadership role in encouraging and securing Army Corps of Engineering dredging activities of both the inner and outer harbors.								X		City, County, Business Owners	Public	City working with Army Corps of Engineering.	Action continues as previously stated.					
<i>Action :</i> Encourage appropriate placement of dredging spoils on City beaches and waterfront.								X		City, County	Public	Summer 2017 spoils were placed on the south end of beach area.	Action continues as previously stated.					
Goal: Seek a balanced approach to tourism, recognizing its contribution to the local economy while minimizing impacts on residents' quality of life.																		
Goal: Support workforce needs of local employers.																		
<i>Objective:</i> Support efforts by Whirlpool, Lakeland Healthcare, LECO, Berrien County, Lake Michigan College, AEP, and other existing employers to attract and retain high quality employees.			X															
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Economic Development, continued	Priority (Objectives only)			Time Frame (Actions only)				Actions only		2016-2017 activities with proposed activity for 2017/2018								
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Within 2 years	2-5 years	5 plus years	Continuous	Responsible Party or Key Partners	Potential Funding Source									
<i>Action:</i> Research the needs and wishes of 25-30 year-olds and create an action plan to address these needs.					X				City, Business Owners	Public, Private	No action.	Public Works - Parks Division looking at possible opportunities.						
<i>Action :</i> Add WiFi hotspots to downtown St. Joseph.					X				City, Others	Public, Private	No action.	No action taken.						

<i>Action:</i> Provide broadband as an essential city infrastructure.					X			Others	Public	No action.	No action taken. Berrien County is working on survey.
<i>Objective:</i> Increase support of existing companies and employers in order to retain them in the city.	X										
<i>Action:</i> Work with St. Joseph Today to support business collaboration with events and networking opportunities.								X City, Others	Public, Private	Continued with established programs. Worked to decrease impacts on residents and businesses. New director hired in Feb 2017.	DDA approved contract with Holt Bosse to provide technical support to businesses during COVID. City Commission approved contract with Southwest MI Regional Chamber to create a virtual downtown experience as part of response to COVID.
<i>Action:</i> Collaborate with Cornerstone Alliance, Cornerstone Chamber Services, and Southwest Michigan Tourist Council to recruit new, desirable employers to the St. Joseph community.								X City, Others	Public, Private	Attended workshops regarding Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) through MEDC.	Two city staff are member of MI Economic Development Association and attend workshops. Requests for information/funding are forwarded to Cornerstone Alliance.
<i>Action:</i> Support access to and awareness of high quality pre-school, daycare, and out of school activities.					X			City, Others	Public, Private	No action.	Parks Division provides summer programs in coordination with other agencies.
<i>Action:</i> Enhance after-school programs through partnerships between schools and PTA collaboration.					X			City, School District	Public	No action.	No action taken.
Goal: Attract and encourage new businesses and cultivate entrepreneurs.											
<i>Action:</i> Explore incentives to attract new businesses.								X City, Others	Public, Grants	Approved State of Michigan incentive for Whirlpool Tech Center	Two staff have completed Basic Course in Economic Development. Incentives approved for LECO and United Federal Credit Union both on Hilltop Road.
<i>Action:</i> Work with Cornerstone Alliance to explore business incubator or shared workspace opportunities for start-up companies.								X City, Others	Public, Private, Grants	No action.	No action.
Goal: Identify strategies to incentivize diverse and desirable residential development within the St. Joseph city limits.											
<i>Action:</i> Utilize the 2016 Kinexus Housing Market Analysis to inform identification of affordable housing locations and multifamily developments.					X			City, Others	Public, Other	No action.	Planning Commission studying options to provide additional housing options on Main Street ground floor buildings.
<i>Action:</i> Consider modifying the zoning code where appropriate to maximize housing options.					X			City	Public	No action.	Planning Commission studying options to provide additional housing options on Main Street ground floor buildings.
<i>Action:</i> Foster public-private partnerships to promote increased housing options.					X			City, Others	Public, Private	No action.	No action taken.
<i>Action:</i> Study options for pursuing affordable housing funds through programs like the MSHDA HOME program, downtown rental rehab, and low income tax credits.						X		City, State, County	Private, Grants	No action.	No action taken.
Goal: Provide a transparent, supportive, welcoming environment for development or redevelopment of property when supported by the master plan and ordinances.											
St. Joseph Action Plan - Table 3.1 - 2016 Master Plan											
	Priority (Objectives only)	Time Frame (Actions only)	Actions only								

Natural Areas and Resilience	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Within 2 years	2-5 years	5 plus years	Continuous	Responsible Party or Key Partners	Potential Funding Source	2016-2017 activities with proposed activity for 2017/2018	
Goal: Maintain, preserve and protect St. Joseph's shorelines, natural areas and natural resources.											
<i>Objective:</i> Protect public trust property along the Lake Michigan shoreline, and existing homes near the shore.	X										
<i>Action :</i> Revisit appropriate coastal measures south of the St. Joseph River as discussed in the 2012 Coastal Study.						X		City	Public	Contract awarded March 2017 which will allow for an update to the 2012 study. Final draft document presented in late 2017.	Document completed
<i>Action:</i> Update the 2012 Coastal Study north of the St. Joseph River at appropriate time intervals or water level change benchmarks, as described in the study.						X		City	Public	Contract awarded March 2017 which will allow for an update to the 2012 study. Anticipated completion in 2017.	Document completed
<i>Action:</i> Enforce appropriate regulations to ensure there is no improper construction in at-risk areas along the coast as identified by FEMA.						X		City	Public	Building permits are reviewed accordingly.	Building permits reviewed accordingly. FEMA in process of updated floodmaps creating VE zone along lake. Processed appeal request on behalf of several residents. Awaiting response from FEMA.
<i>Objective:</i> Increase the tree canopy cover city-wide.			X								
<i>Action:</i> Investigate becoming a nationally recognized 'Tree City'.						X		City	Public, Grants	No action.	No action taken.
<i>Action:</i> Use the tree canopy inventory conducted as a part of the vulnerability assessment to prioritize public street tree plantings.						X		City	Public, Grants	Money in 2017/2018 budget for street tree planting. \$15,000 budget allows for approximately 50 trees. Will continue with tree planting program.	Have continued budgeting \$15,000 for tree planting to allow for 40-50 trees each year. Planted over 140 new trees in 2020.
<i>Action :</i> Consider instituting tree planting or maintenance requirements as a part of the zoning ordinance.						X		City	Public	No action. Planning Commission in early stages of discussion regarding landscaping requirements.	No action taken
<i>Action:</i> Adopt a tree maintenance, tree planting, and tree-cutting policy for public properties.						X		City	Public	Beginning in 2015/2016 hired tree consultant for the removal and trimming of trees. Studying options for yearly maintenance based on geographic areas.	Since 2016 have been performing a regular trimming program by identifying one section a year to be trimmed.
<i>Action:</i> Research projected shifts in tree species and transition street tree-planting programs to trees that will thrive in hotter summers and wetter winters.						X		City	Public	Completed list of desired species to be used throughout the community that better tolerate the weather.	Continue to use this list of street trees for planting program
<i>Action:</i> Create a list of appropriate tree species to plant and educate private property owners on proper maintenance and upkeep.						X		City	Public	List of Street trees has been prepared and is shared.	Stree tree list has been shared and used.

<i>Objective:</i> Identify energy efficiency cost saving opportunities for residents and business owners.			X								City is approximately 50% complete with changing downtown streetlight conversion to LED	
<i>Action:</i> Create measureable goals to incentivize businesses and residents, identifying appropriate non- regulatory benchmarks.						X			City, Others	Public, Grants	No action.	No action taken.
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<i>Objective:</i> Improve infrastructure for electric vehicles.			X									
<i>Action :</i> Explore a comprehensive electric vehicle infrastructure ordinance to encourage provision of electric car charging stations.						X		City	Public		No action.	No action taken. City purchases hybrid vehicles when possible.
<i>Objective:</i> Improve stormwater management on public and private properties.			X									
Goal: Improve access to local food.												
<i>Objective:</i> Expand the City of St. Joseph Farmer's Market			X									
<i>Action:</i> Review the location and operating hours of the farmers market. Consider operating it near local employment base during business hours to offer workers the opportunity to purchase fresh foods.					X			City, Others	Private, Others		Discussions were had with organizers to relocate to new location or expand hours. No changes from past years occurring in summer 2017.	No action taken.
<i>Action:</i> Address delivery logistics to reduce congestion.					X			City, Others	Private, Others		Discussions have occurred. Issuing one parking permit per farmstand.	No additional action taken.
<i>Objective:</i> Promote and expand small scale food entrepreneurship			X									
<i>Action:</i> Explore locations for community gardens.					X			City, Others	Private, Grants, Others		No action.	No action taken.
<i>Action :</i> Encourage and support regional food entrepreneurs by providing a hub for advertising and shuttles to farms, vineyards, and breweries.						X		City, Business Owners, Others	Private, Others		No action. Some restaurants sponsor tours. Not a city activity.	No additional action taken.